



Economic and Social Council

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Commission on the Status of Women

Fifty-first session

26 February-9 March 2007

Item 3 (a) (i) of the provisional agenda*

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child

Statement submitted by the International Federation of Catholic Medical Associations, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

* E/CN.6/2007/1.



Statement

The International Federation of Catholic Medical Associations, F.I.A.M.C., applauds the efforts of the Commission on the Status of Women on the girl child, February 26 - March 9, 2007 at the United Nations, New York, to build a systematic approach against conditions of deprivation and degradation, disease and disability, both medical and societal.

We must, in the words of Pope Paul VI, "place a protective shield of love" over all human life, especially over the most vulnerable and voiceless. There is a grave moral and social duty to justice and to love which echoes in the voice of the sacred texts of Judaism and Christianity, wherein a profound moral question comes to Cain, "where is your brother...what have you done?" (Genesis 4:9) Followed by the fearsome judgment of God, "the voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground" (Genesis 4:10).

In his encyclical "The Gospel of Life", Pope John Paul II tells us that "the blood of every other human killed since Abel is also raised to the Lord" (E.V. 25)

The convention on the girl child is summoned first to "shout out that no one has authority over life" (Pope John Paul II). As life itself is the first good of creation, so the life of the innocent and the little one is most worthy of our deep solicitude. The protective shield of love must be cast over each and every one of them. Accordingly, state parties, non-governmental organizations, health services and social services should work to guard all life and the dignity of the human person "beautifully and wonderfully made". How can we fail to work tirelessly to preserve the innocent beauty of the girl child, guarding her in all aspects, both for her own sake and for the future promise of the new life she will one day bear. This will mean that we guard "virginity and motherhood as two particular dimensions of the fulfillment of the female personality" (*Mulieris Dignitatem*, John Paul II, 1988).

The whole world knows of the crimes against the child, beginning with the world wide traffic in girl children and young women for sexual abuse, even sexual murder. Their virginity stolen, their hopes of motherhood ended, their personhood and personality destroyed, are crimes which cry out to heaven for justice.

These pernicious evils extend through child pornography, now terribly facilitated by new technologies which can instantaneously bring this degradation of the person and the feminine anywhere in the world. At the same time, every time, this cripples the personality and will of all who use these technologies for such pernicious ends, and, by extension, cripples the whole society and penetrates it with ever escalating violence against the child and woman. This terrible cycle, now spreading everywhere, must be stopped.

Pope John Paul II repeatedly spoke of a "new civilization of love" noting in his encyclical on the dignity of women that "from the 'beginning' woman, like man, was created and 'placed' by God in this order of love" (*Mulieris Dignitatem*). This good, an absolute personal and social necessity, must begin with the collaboration of all state parties, all organizations using all

enforcement and political means available, on the one hand, and all medical and educational means where applicable to stem the worldwide menace of sex traffic and pornography.

The commission must also address the more subtle but potentially no less critical harm to the girl child in the first world ravages of divorce and child bearing outside of marriage. Millions of little girls are bereft of an authentic home and hearth with the security of parental love given by a father and a mother who regard the call to marriage and the right ordered family as the gravest personal and social duty. Surely the flood of sex crimes against the child, the flood of abuses against the child, physical and psychological, can only be repaired within the family and the family can only be repaired when all the contrivances of the state are once again turned in its favor. Indeed, the very stability of the state itself ultimately depends on the stability of the authentic family, biologically valid and morally right in conception, guaranteed by convention.

No state or international body can fail to address the profound importance of the "anthropological truth" of the integral family, ordained by nature as the first household of the family of man. The girl child, as the boy, has an inalienable right inscribed in the law of nature, *nomos*, to be born of a mother and father who "know them and love them, who, in mutual exclusivity and charitable cooperation give both life and love to the littlest ones. From the beginning of life through the mature formation of the person and personality.

The family, likewise, must be a protective shield against any ritual practices against the girl child, including ritual genital mutilation, cranial molding, foot and limb binding and the use of various somatic artifacts, to name the most egregious. Appeals to cultural and religious practices do not cancel out the duly autonomous person whose right it is at any time, in any place, to freely enjoy, without harm, the gift of life and everything ordained in nature to serve it as the Creator intended.

Finally, the Catholic physicians, scientists, teachers and bioethicists of F.I.A.M.C. offer their individual work and the corporate efforts of F.I.A.M.C. to the attainment of all the worthy goals of the commission and its protection of the girl child. F.I.A.M.C. asks all doctors, nurses and health care workers world wide to make common cause to promote and protect the girl child, and children of all ages, working through media, personal effort and political collaboration.

Pope Benedict XVI, in his joyous encyclical "God is Love", reminds us that love is built on justice, where there is no justice, there is no love. Beyond all, he says, is the merciful love of God which each man and woman is called to impart to the world.



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and to the twenty-third special session of the
General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender
equality, development and peace for the twenty-first
century": implementation of strategic objectives and
action in critical areas of concern and further actions
and initiatives; the elimination of all forms of
discrimination and violence against the girl child**

Statement submitted by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996.

* E/CN.6/2007/1.



Statement

Introduction

The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child, the priority theme under consideration by the 51st session of the Commission on the Status of Women, is at the heart of many public service initiatives undertaken by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Several Delta programs are directed at the health and well being of girls, particularly in the African American community.

Dr. Betty Shabazz Delta Academy

Catching the Dreams of Tomorrow, Preparing Young Women For Leadership in the 21st Century, the Delta Academy was created out of an urgent need for bold action to save young females, ages 11-14, from the perils of academic failure, low self-esteem, and crippled futures. It provides opportunities for local chapters to: enrich and enhance education, augment scholarship in math, science, and technology; provide service; and cultivate sisterhood and relationships.

Delta GEMS: Growing and Empowering Myself Successfully

An outgrowth of the Delta Academy, Delta GEMS was created to "catch the dreams" of African American, at-risk, adolescent girls aged 14-18. It provides the framework to actualize those dreams by developing a "can do" attitude. Its goals are:

To instill the need to excel academically;

To provide tools to sharpen and enhance skills for academic success;

To assist girls in goal setting and planning; and

To create compassionate, caring, and community-minded young women

Health Issues Impacting Women and Girls of African Descent

Obesity; HIV/AIDs; and breast, cervical, and ovarian cancers are all health issues impacting women and girls of African descent at disproportionate rates. In 2006, Delta held a conference in Jamaica, commemorating twenty-five years of international summits focusing on health issues of the Diaspora. It raised awareness about the benefits of lifestyle changes that affect longevity, morbidity, and mortality. One of the first priorities was to combat the high incidence of obesity among women and girls.

Delta's international support to prenatal care

Prenatal care and safe birth deliveries are indispensable to the development of healthy young girls. Yet, adequate prenatal and maternity care is often unavailable to women in our ancestral homeland of Africa. Delta historically has recognized this critical issue. In the 1960s, Delta made a

major donation to help finance the construction of Thika Maternity Hospital in Thika, Kenya, the first to open after independence. Delta has maintained its ties to the Hospital, subsequently renamed Mary Help of the Sick Mission Hospital, as it continues to increase its population and improve the infant mortality rate in and around Thika.

Most recently, Delta has been raising funds to contribute to the distribution of maama kits, as part of the WHO initiative for safe birthing in Africa.

Future action

Delta remains committed to working with the international community to effectively eliminate discrimination and violence against the girl child, enabling her empowerment in mind, body and spirit.



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Statement submitted by Rotary International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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Statement

Rotary's 1.2 million members in 168 countries are actively working to meet the goals of the 51st Commission on the Status of Women. Rotary clubs worldwide develop projects that help prevent discrimination and violence against the girl child.

Rotary clubs support and empower women in their communities by providing access to economic and social development through education, literacy, numeracy, information technology and job training programs. Rotary also offers equal access to its clubs, projects, youth exchange, scholarships, and group study exchange programs.

Rotary works to create a world where everyone has access to safety, economic independence and education. Rotary clubs on every continent create projects that benefit all people, especially women and girls.

Rotary clubs, as well as Rotaract (ages 18-30) and Interact (ages 14-18) clubs, in all parts of the world develop projects that promote gender equality. These projects work to provide shelter, education, and resources that enrich the lives of women and children.

For example:

- Rotary clubs in Accra-Labone, Ghana, Uganda and Ojai, California, United States of America, have combined resources to create a refuge and vocational training center for girls living on the street in Accra. They have also implemented a program to help the girls start baking or catering businesses.
- In the wake of the December 2004 tsunami in South Asia, Rotary members in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland created the Rotary Education on Wheels program to supply girls in Tamilnadu, south India with bicycles so they can attend school.
- A Rotary member in Washington, D.C., United States of America, obtained a US\$50,000 Matching Grant from The Rotary Foundation to provide a water well, furniture, and computer equipment for a school to educate young Maasai women in Kenya.

These Rotary projects are among many that encourage and develop greater self-sufficiency for the girl child.

Rotary will continue to encourage its members to develop projects to address the needs of women in their communities, and to provide women with access to education, economic and social development and healthcare. Rotary works to ensure that its programs and projects truly benefit all the world's citizens.



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Statement submitted by Tiye International, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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Statement

"We are determined to...ensure the human right of... the girl child as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.....ensure the full enjoyment by ...the girl child of all human rights... and take effective action against violations of these rights...(Beijing Declaration, paras. 9 and 23)"

Tiye International is pleased that CSW will be focussing on the issues of the girl child in 2007. This emphasis is of essential importance in a world wherein violence against the girl child is still so common. In many countries of the South, the education of the girl child is hardly ever a priority. A girl child growing up without education is extremely vulnerable. In many settings, we witness that children easily become victims of pornography and the sex industries, or are conscripted as child labourers. Girl children are also abused in conflict situations and are also forced to fight in the wars of their countries.

In the North, the bringing up of the girl-child is given more and more less attention, her individual freedom is neglected, her safety is compromised and her emancipation is likewise left unattended. This is the result of inequality in gender and the deep rooted patriarchal norms. These same norms limit the application of laws to its maximum.

Another severe problem facing the girl-child in the North, for example in the Netherlands, is the fact that many innocent children of asylum seekers are locked up in prisons together with their undocumented parents. These children can be deported on their own without support even to countries where they were not born, often without anyone who can receive them and guarantee their safety.

Even in their most intimate settings, most girl children are not safe. They are often subject to violence and incest practices in their homes, where they should feel most secure. According to research findings in the Netherlands, 15.6% of Dutch girl-children have been sexual abused before the age of 16 and have suffered sexual abuses in the hand of family members. Six to seven out of a hundred women in the Netherlands have been victims of incest (are abused). The average age that girl - children are abused start at around 11.4 years. 42.5% of these victims are abused within the nuclear family and their direct environment. 18.8% of the perpetrators are fathers or male caregivers, 25.4% are brothers, and 25.4% are uncles. Furthermore, the perpetrators are grandfathers, cousins, brothers-in-law, or roommates.

As bad as it is these are not the only forms of violence against the girl child. Domestic violence, indirect impact of honour killings, mutilations are mostly done to the girl children world wide because of their vulnerability.

Abuse and other forms of violation of the rights of the girl child destroy the self confidence and respect of the girl child and the woman she becomes and have also impact on the generations to come, raised by these women.

Tiye condemns all forms of violence against the girl children, including physical, mental and sexual violence, torture and exploitation, hostage taking. Domestic violence, trafficking or sale of children and their organs, paedophilia, child prostitution, child pornography and child sex tourism as well as the increasing phenomenon of gang-related violence.

Tiye is also deeply concerned that the situations of poverty, war and armed conflict girl children are among those most effected and that their potential for full development is limited. Also the girl children become victims of rape, sexual transmitted disease and increasingly of HIV, which have a serious impact on the quality of her life and leave her open to further discrimination, violence and neglect.

Racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance reveal in a differentiated manner for women and girls and can be among the factors leading to a deterioration in their living conditions, poverty, violence, forms of multiple discrimination and limitation or denial of their human rights.

Tiye International urges the States to take all necessary measures and to institute legal reforms to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by the girl child of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and to take effective action against violations of those rights and freedoms.

Further Tiye International deeply urges States to strengthen efforts to prevent and protect girl children from all forms of violence through a comprehensive approach to protect girl children from abuse by government officials such as the police, law enforcement authorities and officials in detention centre or welfare institutions. Also to take measures to protect girl children from violence r abuse in schools including intimidation, maltreatment and bullying, to establish complaint mechanisms that are age- and gender appropriate.

Tiye International hopes that the year 2007 will contribute to emphasise the importance of taking appropriate measures to protect the rights of the girl child against all this injustice.



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Statement submitted by Centre for Women, the Earth, the Divine, European Union of Women, Hadassah-Women's Zionist Organization of America, International Council of Jewish Women, International Council of Women, International Federation for Home Economics, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, National Council of German Women's Organizations, Pan Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association of Thailand, Salvation Army, Servas International, Socialist International Women, Soroptimist International, Third World Movement against the Exploitation of Women, Women's Federation for World Peace International, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

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Statement

We, the undersigned international and national non-governmental organisations in consultative status with ECOSOC, members of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Status of Women, present to the 51st session of CSW the following statement for information and consideration:

We urge governments to fulfil their commitment to International Conventions, treaties and agreements, by the development and implementation of appropriate laws that guarantee the protection of the girl child from abuse, violence, exploitation and neglect.

- Ensure that law enforcement has adequate resources and training to respond to violence against the girl child, to respond quickly to incidents of violence with compassion, understanding and respect; and to patrol of public places and streets;
- Provide timely and effective resources and appropriate support to victims of violence including safe shelter and free access to medical and psychological treatment;
- Introduce and enforce legislation making religious and traditional practices which harm girls illegal, including female genital mutilation, underage marriages and forced abortion;
- Severely penalise those who benefit from the sexual exploitation of the girl child, including prostitution, sex tourism, pornography, mail order brides and exploitation via the Internet.

We urge governments to do their utmost to secure the safety of the girl child from acts of violence and to give assistance to overcome the consequences when violence does occur, and to:

- Implement special services for the girl child who is a victim of any form of sexual exploitation;
- Create or strengthen the mechanisms for reporting acts of violence in a safe and confident environment;
- Provide effective witness protection;
- Support gender specific research into the causes and best practices in addressing violent behaviour; disseminate the results and act on the recommendations.

The member organisations of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Status of Women furthermore urge governments to

- Develop legislation and programmes aimed at the eradication of the exploitation of the girl child;
- Ensure access to education and sufficient nutrition for the girl child;
- Protect the girl child against physical, sexual or emotional abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation;
- Provide particular care for the girl child living on the streets, for refugees and victims of war.